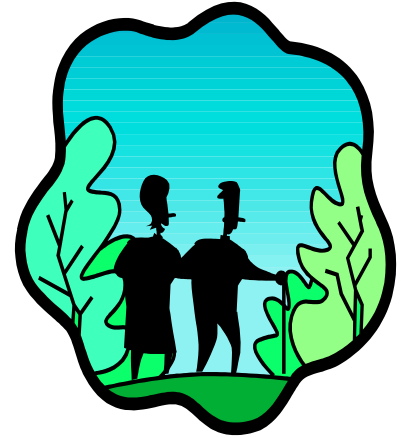


Mount Vernon Police Ledger

March 2009

Assistance for Seniors with Disabilities

The Mount Vernon District Station of the Fairfax County Police Department has a program to assist families with adults and children who have cognitive disabilities. Such conditions include autism, dementia, Alzheimer's, amnesia and other disabilities that may affect memory or the ability to communicate. The objective is to help your loved one return home quickly in the event that they are lost or come into police contact. Mount Vernon District Station encourages you to register any family member who has cognitive disabilities. This program would benefit you and your loved one because a photo of the lost person, and their name and address gives the police a tool to help return your loved one in a timely manner.



If you participate in this program, a Fairfax County police officer will respond to your residence to photograph your loved one and obtain necessary information. This service is free. A current photograph and pertinent information is an invaluable resource for law enforcement in these situations and can expedite the return of your loved one.

This information will not be released to the public and will be used for law enforcement purposes only.

Please direct any inquiries or appointment request to:

PFC Melissa Wallace 703-360-8400 ext.2315 or e-mail Melissa.wallace@fairfaxcounty.gov

MPO Robbie Clift 703-360-8400 ext. 2259 or e-mail Robert.clift@fairfaxcounty.gov

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Dates to Remember :

March 8 - Daylight Savings Time
March 10 - CAC Meeting
March 17 - St. Patrick's Day
March 20 - First Day of Spring

Tips on Protecting your Home and Property

- Immediately call the police whenever you observe something suspicious. Many crimes would be deterred if everyone was alert to suspicious activity and notified the police.
- Maintaining an appearance of occupancy, even when your residence is vacant, is essential to thwarting burglary attempts. Timers which automatically regulate the interior lighting of a home can make it look “lived in.” Timers can be used while on vacation, when you are out to dinner or even during the day while at work. A talk radio station on a timer can also deter burglars from entering your home.
- Exterior lighting is extremely important to residential security. Yard lights and entrance lights can be equipped with sensors and timers to turn lights on at dusk and off at dawn while motion detector can be installed to turn lights on when someone enters your property.



- Many home owners wish to increase their protection by adding an alarm system. This is highly recommended because individuals who have been arrested say that an alarm is the number one deterrent that keeps them from burglarizing a residence.
- Keep doorways, windows and porches clear when planting bushes and flowers. Remember that the bushes which provide you with privacy also gives a burglar a place to hide.
- Window locks are just as important as locks on your door. All basement windows and ground floor windows as well as those easily reached from places like the roof, porch and carport should be secured. Locks on these windows prevent a burglar from breaking the window and reaching in and opening the latch. Burglars seldom crawl through the broken glass in a window frame.
- Let your neighbors know when you plan to go on vacation and do the following:
 - Stop your papers (including the free neighborhood newspaper)
 - Stop your mail
 - Lock up outside ladders
- Mark your valuable property so it can be identified if it is stolen. Engravers may be borrowed from Fairfax County Public Libraries. Also, take pictures of your valuables to help with identification if they are stolen.

These home security tips and many more are what a trained officer will tell you if you schedule a Home Security Survey. The surveys are free and provided to you as a service. Call the Mount Vernon District Crime Prevention Officers at 703-360-8928 to schedule yours!

To Report Crime Call: **911 (Emergency)**

703-691-2131 (Non-Emergency)

Resolve to Participate in Your Neighborhood Watch

The Fairfax County Police Department would like every community in Mount Vernon to have a Neighborhood Watch and encourage's an increase in the number of participants in communities where a Watch already exists. We resolve to do all we can to help communities start and sustain the Watch program. We have found that many people shy away from participating in, or organizing, a Watch for many reasons. The excuses range from "I have no time to spare" to "there is no crime in our community" or a fear that the neighborhood predator will retaliate. Neighborhood Watch does not require anyone to walk, drive, confront, contact or do anything they would be uncomfortable with. In fact, during Neighborhood Watch training, we explicitly tell Watchers NOT to contact or confront those seen acting criminally or suspiciously.



A priority for the Watch program is establishing a means of communication between: 1) neighbors 2) neighboring communities 3) the police department. The more accurate and timely information we can get out to an organized Watch group, the better they can help us protect their communities. With more people "in the know" we have a greater likelihood of having someone call the police for suspicious activity.

Neighborhood Watch is not an instant fix, nor is it a panacea, but when neighbors care about and participate in the program, we have a better chance at solving current problems or those that may crop up in the future. Time constraints affect everyone and we understand that it is hard to find the time for another project. However, what could be more important than looking out for the safety of our families, property and community?

Fear of reprisals or retaliation is a problem we police officers understand, which is why, as I stated earlier, the program strongly dissuades against any contact or confrontation between Watcher/Resident and potential suspects. We want hundreds of pairs of eyes looking out for suspicious/criminal activity and then calling us with timely, accurate and detailed information. This simple act greatly increases the police department's ability to investigate, arrest and deter crime.

No matter where we live, at some point our community will be touched by crime. Be it property, violent or nuisance crimes, quality of life issues or proximity to a serious event, all are possible and require awareness and preparedness. It is better to lay the foundation and be prepared than to wait and be caught flat-footed after an incident occurs. Starting and maintaining a Watch program can be a challenge because of the issues mentioned in this article as well as other considerations specific to your community. It will require a core group of dedicated persons to establish a program but after the initial struggle, the time involvement generally decreases. The activity or the passivity of the Watch is totally up to the community and its needs. As we said before the most important part is the communications network.



Please consider making a resolution to join or create a Neighborhood Watch for your community.

For more information on Neighborhood Watch please contact MPO Robbie Clift at 703-360-8400 ext 2259 or e-mail Robert.clift@fairfaxcounty.gov.

“Don’t Talk To Strangers” just isn’t good enough any more.

by Lynn Rafferty and Martha Johnson r.a.d.KIDS Instructors, PRE-ACT, Inc.

“Don’t talk to strangers!” We’ve all said it to our kids. But in the modern, fast-paced information age we live in, that’s just not good enough anymore. Why not? Because strangers talk to kids all the time - sometimes just to be friendly, sometimes to offer assistance and sometimes with criminal intent. Children who are lost and looking for help are probably going to *need* to ask a stranger for help.

Teaching kids good safety practices can become *very* confusing. So let’s break the subject down into manageable parts, always keeping in mind that *practicing* these skills continuously is essential.

First, let’s define “stranger.” For a minor, “stranger” should be defined as *anyone they do not know well*. For example, even a familiar person in your neighborhood whom you only know by name should be considered a stranger. And the carpenter who has been remodeling your kitchen for six weeks is a stranger too, because you really don’t know him well. When teaching “stranger,” use the real people in your child’s life as examples. The first step in helping kids make safer choices when situations arise is to define exactly who and what a “stranger” is.

Next, children need to be taught that under no circumstances is it appropriate for strangers to ask kids for help. Strangers (and adults) ask *adults* for assistance, not children. If someone breaks this rule, an alarm bell should go off in your child’s head. For young children, you can call that alarm bell their “spidey-sense” (just like Spiderman has). Predators use the fact that children are raised to be polite and helpful to gain their trust and attempt to lure them into inappropriate contact. “What If” games are great for teaching children about the various ways strangers might approach them. “What If” games could include: strangers asking for directions; requests for help in looking for a lost child (or puppy or kitten); asking a child to accept a letter to mail in a nearby mailbox and; requests for help carrying something to a car or into a house.

What should children be taught to do if a stranger approaches? Safe responses may include “I’ll go get help” or “I’ll go ask my dad.” In conjunction with these types of verbal responses, kids should always be taught to move away quickly, run home, go to the nearest known adult or “safe” adult (a police officer, store manager, clerk, or a mother with children) or to a busy store or public area. This response allows a child to feel polite or helpful while simultaneously removing himself or herself from a potentially dangerous encounter. Playing “What If” games *regularly* keeps children’s level of awareness high and their personal safety skills sharp. *Practice makes perfect.*

Sometimes parents are reluctant to teach personal safety lessons to their children for fear of frightening them. But children already hear scary stories and get misinformation from friends and classmates all the time. Giving kids accurate information and teaching them good safety skills *reduces* anxiety – theirs and yours - and helps build self-confidence. And confident people, big and small, are less likely to become victims. Even small children should be given age-appropriate information about body privacy. Learning the parts of their bodies that are covered by bathing suits are personal and private, and that the same goes for everybody else, is an important concept to instill early in a child’s life. The more clear, accurate information children have, and the sooner they have it, the better protected they are. A child predator once said: “The best gift you can give me is an ignorant child.”

It is great to know that parents and other caring adults can help ensure that each and every child is well-prepared to enjoy the happy and safe childhoods they deserve.

ChildSafeNet works in partnership with the Fairfax County Police to make our communities safer for kids. For more information on child/teen safety, or to schedule a *ChildSafeNet* program, contact Anne Harrison, Executive Director, at 703.768.9477, or anne@childsafenet.org. Visit *ChildSafeNet* online at www.childsafenet.org for a wealth of good safety information as well as links to other organizations with expertise in the field of child protection. ChildSafeNet, Inc., PO Box 7144, Fairfax Station, VA, 22039.

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Laws of the Month

Shoplifting - § 18.2-103. Concealing or taking possession of merchandise; altering price tags; transferring goods from one container to another; counseling, etc., another in performance of such acts.



Whoever, without authority, with the intention of converting goods or merchandise to his own or another's use without having paid the full purchase price thereof, or of defrauding the owner of the value of the goods or merchandise, (i) willfully conceals or takes possession of the goods or merchandise of any store or other mercantile establishment, or (ii) alters the price tag or other price marking on such goods or merchandise, or transfers the goods from one container to another, or (iii) counsels, assists, aids or abets another in the performance of any of the above acts, when the value of the goods or merchandise

involved in the offense is less than \$200, shall be guilty of petit larceny and, when the value of the goods or merchandise involved in the offense is \$200 or more, shall be guilty of grand larceny. The willful concealment of goods or merchandise of any store or other mercantile establishment, while still on the premises thereof, shall be prima facie evidence of an intent to convert and defraud the owner thereof out of the value of the goods or merchandise.

Grand Larceny - § 18.2-95. Grand larceny defined; how punished.

Any person who (i) commits larceny from the person of another of money or other thing of value of \$5 or more, (ii) commits simple larceny not from the person of another of goods and chattels of the value of \$200 or more, or (iii) commits simple larceny not from the person of another of any firearm, regardless of the firearm's value, shall be guilty of grand larceny, punishable by imprisonment in a state correctional facility for not less than one nor more than twenty years or, in the discretion of the jury or court trying the case without a jury, be confined in jail for a period not exceeding twelve months or fined not more than \$2,500, either or both.



Petit Larceny - § 18.2-96. Petit larceny defined; how punished.

Any person who:

1. Commits larceny from the person of another of money or other thing of value of less than \$5, or
2. Commits simple larceny not from the person of another of goods and chattels of the value of less than \$200, except as provided in subdivision (iii) of § 18.2-95, shall be deemed guilty of petit larceny, which shall be punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.

**Anyone with information is asked to call
Crime Solvers at**

**1-866-411-TIPS[8477] or
Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.**



What to Do When You are Stopped by Police

Article located at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police

Your Safety is Important to Us!

The Police Department suggests that the actions listed in this page be taken if you are stopped by a police officer. When you follow them, your encounter with the police will likely be brief, positive and much safer for both you and the officer.

Awareness as well as involvement and cooperation are essential elements of effective policing.

Why do police stop citizens/vehicles?

You:

- fit the description of a suspect.
 - witnessed a crime.
 - appear to need assistance.
 - have been pointed out as a suspect.
 - are in an area where a crime has just occurred.
- violated the law.

When approached by a police officer:

- Follow the officer's instructions.
- Keep your hands clearly visible.
- Make movements slowly.
- Verbally inform the officer of any weapon present and whether you possess a concealed handgun permit for it.

Wait for specific instructions.

- Remain calm and do not become argumentative.

Cooperation on your part can greatly reduce the time the officer detains you.

When in a vehicle:

- Follow the previous instructions
- Remain seated in the vehicle; do not get out of the vehicle unless instructed to do so.
- Keep your hands visible.
- During darkness, turn on the interior light prior to the officer approaching.
- Produce your drivers license and vehicle registration upon request.

Remember

There are many reasons why you might be stopped by the police. Whatever the reason, the police officer needs your cooperation. Overreaction can make the situation worse.

Consider that the officer:

- May not be stopping you for the same reason that you perceive.
- Usually does not have any previous knowledge of you.
- Is trained to remain in a position that enhances his or her safety.

Does not intend to offend you.

You maybe searched:

- when arrested
- when a warrant exists
- when you have given consent.
- when probable cause to arrest exists.

Police officers may at any time request permission to search a person, vehicle or property. If permission is freely and knowingly given, the officer may conduct a search as granted.

If the police officer suspects that you may be armed, the officer is allowed to frisk you to see if you have any weapons. This procedure is to ensure the safety of everyone present.



Crossing Guards Needed

Being a crossing guard is a very important job. A crossing guard makes sure students cross the street safely and keeps an eye on strangers in the area. In essence, you are our extended eyes and ears for the community. When there is not a crossing guard to work a mandated crossing location, a police officer has to handle the crossing. There can be “four” to “five” crossings a day that the police have to handle. This means there are fewer officers to handle calls, which increases the response time to critical incidents.

Please call the Mount Vernon station if you are interested in becoming a crossing guard. This is another great opportunity for you to help out in the community and get paid doing it.

What do Crossing Guards Do?

- Work 10 hours per week.
- Control traffic to ensure the safe and orderly movement of student pedestrians to and from school.
- Monitor operation of wink-o-matic school flashing lights during opening and closing times and report any malfunctions.
- Report hazardous traffic conditions at student crossing locations.

What qualifications do you need?

- High school diploma or a G.E.D. issued by a state department of education.
- Knowledge of traffic regulations.
- Ability and willingness to work in inclement weather.
- Ability to work with children, ability to follow written and oral instructions, tact and courtesy.

Applicants should be able to pass a medical exam provided by the Occupational Health Center. They must satisfactorily complete a criminal background check.

Benefits: Uniforms and training are provided. Employees are able to participate in a retirement program; they earn annual and sick leave according to hours worked (minimum of 1 hour per pay period); they are reimbursed for mileage and afforded the option of enrolling in a health plan if they have more than two crossings.

How do you apply? You can get an application at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police or from the Mount Vernon District Police Station. You can also contact Sgt. John Stern at the Mount Vernon station at 703-360-8400 ext 2298 or email Jonathan.Stern@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Pay: \$12.80 to \$21.34/hour

COME JOIN OUR TEAM



CROSSING GUARDS NEEDED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

**THE FAIRFAX COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT
IS SEEKING QUALIFIED APPLICANTS FOR THE
POSITION OF SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD**



**Mount Vernon Citizens
Advisory Committee**

**Fairfax County Police
Department**

Mount Vernon District Station

2511 Parkers Lane

Alexandria, Virginia 22306

Station Phone Number: 703-360-8400

Crime Prevention: 703-360-8928

Email: mtvcpo@fairfaxcounty.gov

Non-Emergency—703-691-2131

EMERGENCY—911

***Making Our Community Safer
Through Crime Prevention***

Mount Vernon Citizens Advisory Committee

Chairman - Judy Schultheis

Vice Chairman - Ginger Krup

Treasurer - Marianne Baltimore

Secretary - Mary Alvarado

Mount Vernon District Station

Station Commander - Captain David Moyer

Assistant Commander - Lieutenant David Russell

Crime Prevention Officer - MPO Robbie Clift

Crime Prevention Officer- PFC Daryl Davis

Fairfax County is committed to nondiscrimination in all county programs, services and activities. Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request. Call 703-691-2131, TTY 703-204-2664

A Fairfax County, Va., publication

**Remember, for Non-Emergency events or reports, call
703-691-2131**

The Mount Vernon Citizens Advisory Committee's monthly meeting will be on March 10 and will be held at the Mount Vernon District Police Station at 7:30 p.m. The speaker will be Gerry Hyland the Mount Vernon District Supervisor. Mr. Hyland will be talking about revitalization of the Route 1 corridor and the county budget.

